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THE FAITHFUL STEWARD.

A SERMON

PREACHED IN ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, MILWAUKEE,

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14th, 1854,

AT THE OPENING OF THE

EIGHTH ANNUAL CONVENTION

OF THE

Protestant Episcopal Church,

IN THE

DIOCESE OF WISCONSIN.

BY THE REV. W. W. ARNETT, D. D.


RECTOR OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH.

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THE FAITHFUL STEWARD.

2 CORINTHIANS, iv. *1, 2.

“Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful.”

In the New Testament, the Church is styled a house or temple ; and believers, as lively stones, are said to be “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone ; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.” Then, in other passages, the idea is slightly varied, and the Church is regarded as that contained within the house or temple, and is called a *family*, or *household*—“the household of faith”—“the household of God”—“the whole family in heaven and earth.” This family, with its “one spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all,” *is one body*, governed by one Head, and animated by one Heart. All its members are supposed to dwell together in unity and love.

They may occupy different positions in the household, promoting its prosperity in different degrees, as ability and opportunity serve; yet none so small, so humble, as not to be a brother or a sister in Christ. The Catholic Church throughout the world, notwithstanding all the discord and alienation by which its peace has been disturbed, is one family—one in principle, one in theory, one in fact. Yet, practically, our own parish is our church-family; because our personality is limited principally to one place. There our church-life has its center. Christian effort, and zeal, and sympathy may go abroad; but the hallowed associations of home—the sweet communion, solemn vows, prayers and praises—are associated with one spot, and with those who are there wont to meet! Patriotism, for example, includes our whole country in its large embrace; but who does not know that the feelings engendered in our homes, around our own hearths, are the fuel, without which the fire of patriotism would soon die out? So the pure flame of an enlarged catholicity is nourished by domestic and parochial piety.

There is something touching and beautiful in the very idea of such a family of Christ, with its common affections, aims and hopes! Now in this household is set for its edification by God himself, the ministry of reconciliation. This ministry is called by different names, such as pastors, teachers, rulers, shepherds, and

the like, to indicate the nature and duties of the office. In my text, the ministry is viewed under the aspect of stewardship ; which will lead us to consider, not so immediately the general doctrine of the Christian ministry, as the practical duties and responsibilities which its exercise involves.

The position of stewards in ancient households, and their duties, may be gathered from different passages in the Bible, such as the parable of the unjust steward ; the history of Eliezer, who was steward in Abraham's house ; as was Joseph in the house of Potiphar. The steward had authority over the servants of the household ; assigned them their tasks, and distributed to them their portions. To him was entrusted the general management of the household affairs, and the keeping of accounts, particularly during the absence of the master. Persons filling this office were usually themselves servants or slaves. " In the pictures lately discovered in the Egyptian tombs, the steward is seen often, with all his writing materials, taking an exact note of the amount of the harvest, before it is stored in the granaries." As he was responsible for the distribution, he must take account of what was received.

The economy of life explains the economy of grace ; and the duties of the household throw light into the Church.

The steward, whether in the ancient domestic establishment or in the Church of Christ, is a *Servant*.

“Let a man so account of us, as of the *ministers* or *servants* of Christ.” However elevated the *office* of the Christian ministry—however much that office is magnified—the *person* filling it is a *servant*—a servant of Christ—a servant of his people. The steward is not therefore a lord over God’s heritage, but simply a *fellow servant*, clothed with a sacred office in which important trusts are confided. He is made the repository of valuable treasure—the keeper of household portions for seasonable distribution to his fellow servants.

Here we may, in passing, say to the laity, you have the scriptural idea of the Christian Ministry in your relation to it. You are not to expect perfection in the pastor ; for he is a man of like passions and infirmities with yourself. You are not to regard him or his office with superstitious reverence, as the repository of a magical influence ; for he is thy brother, and lives himself upon the same that he distributes to thee. Neither are you to be too exacting in your requirements of him ; for, though a servant, he is thy *fellow servant*. And this thy brother and fellow servant, is not to be despised because both Christ’s and thy servant, for he is invested with a sacred office, and should be esteemed very highly for his work’s sake. This obvious distinction between the man and his office, should not be lost sight of. He does not cease to be a man—he does not cease to be a Christian—

that is, a *fellow servant*, by being clothed with this office ; these he still retains. As a man and as a servant, he is one with his people, though in office he is made to differ from them.

This servant of Christ is a *Steward*. We have said that the steward's office involved the management of the master's affairs. It is always of course to be supposed that the master has given at least some general directions, not leaving all to the prudence and discretion of his overseer. A certain known object is to be accomplished—specific ends are to be attained—appropriate means employed. But suppose, for example, the steward, without any reference to these, were to seek the alienation of the master's lands, or to divert the labors of his fellow-servants to his own emolument, or were to abuse them, or to conspire with them against their common master to defraud him of his honor, his power or his wealth ; would his unauthorized acts be allowed as valid, or his office protect him from condemnation ?

The office of a steward, we should remember, is not an independant, but a dependant trust ; limited in its rights and privileges, and prescript in its duties. Whatsoever is done within the commission, is authoritative and binding ; but all acts beyond or against it are void. No minister of Christ has a right to exact any service, prescribe any worship, impose any duties or conditions, demand the belief of any doctrines, in

his own or his Master's name, which the Word of God does not affirm. This is a point authoritatively ruled in our Church. "Holy Scripture," says the VIth Article, "containeth all things necessary to salvation ; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."

I have thus endeavored to draw the distinction between the Steward of the house and the Lord of the house—between Stewardship and Lordship. The latter is Christ's ; the former belongs by his appointment to the ministry. No steward, therefore, has the right to dispense man's traditions for Catholic verities, nor to substitute the decrees of councils for the Word of God.

The subject matter of the trust confided to the steward, next demands attention. "*Stewards of the mysteries of God.*" The "mysteries of God" are entrusted to the pastor for the flock. You readily perceive the importance necessarily attaching to the phrase "mysteries of God." The interpretation imparts its significance to the whole ministerial work.

By "the mysteries of God," is simply meant the Gospel, as a careful examination of parallel texts sufficiently demonstrates. As stress is laid on this interpretation, allow me to refer to some of those passages which establish its correctness. Jesus told his

disciples when explaining to them the parable of the sower, which, as you know, refers to the preaching of the Gospel—"It is given unto you to know the *mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven*." And St. Paul, exhorting the Ephesians to pray for him as an ambassador in bonds, says, "that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the *mysteries of the Gospel*." Again he says :—"Unto me is this grace given, that I should preach among the gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ ; and to make all men see what is the *fellowship of the mystery*, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God." And finally, the same Apostle says to the Collossians—"I am made a minister—to fulfil the word of God ; even the *mystery which hath been hid from ages*, and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints, to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this *mystery* among the gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory, *whom we preach*."

The only difficulty in the way of our interpretation is the application of the word *mystery* to that gospel declared by its great Author to be plain to the meanest capacity. This objection is more apparent than real ; for the word does not here mean what we ordinarily understand by the term *mystery*—a doctrine totally incomprehensible to the human understanding—but rather the disclosing of what had been secret—secret, not because unfathomably obscure in

itself, but something which had been intentionally concealed for ages, or dimly hinted in prophetic vision, or darkly shadowed in types, but now revealed—made clear to the sight and level to the comprehension.

From this interpretation, you perceive why such stress is laid upon a PREACHING MINISTRY, who establish and edify believers with sound doctrine. Preach the word—publish the gospel—proclaim the glad tidings—are the high behests ever to be prominent in the pastoral work. This, furthermore, is eminently an age of inquiry, activity and intellectuality. And if the steward would be faithful in meeting the wants of the age, and at the same time be loyal to Christ and his Church, he must study to bring out of his treasury things new and old.

There is a fundamental requisition in this office yet to be noticed: "Moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful." *Faithfulness* is what Christ requires, and what his people have a right to expect. This, of course, is not the only qualification for the office, nor the only virtue to be exemplified in the discharge of its duties, but being fundamental, is here made prominent. From the very nature of the office, we see at a glance that one in whom confidence cannot be reposed, should never be entrusted with it.

"Who is a true and faithful steward?" asks Lati-mer, in honest plainness of speech. "He is true, he

is faithful, that coineth no new money, but seeketh it ready coined of the good man of the house, and neither chargeth it nor clippeth it, after it is taken to him to spend, but spendeth even the self-same that he had of his lord, and spendeth it as his lord commanded him." His meaning is, that the pure doctrine of Christ, without debasement, addition, or diminution, and bearing the impress of the Lord's own image and superscription, should be faithfully dispensed for the good of the household. He must therefore be faithful in *doctrine*; preaching the *true* in opposition to the *false*—the *whole* doctrine, and not merely a *part*—the *symmetrical doctrine*, in opposition to undue prominence given to non-essentials. Things true in themselves, may become untrue in the ministration, from being magnified into undue proportions. Half truths are often the most pernicious errors. A rite or a ceremony occupying a modest position in the perspective, may be beautiful and appropriate, yet if obtruded into the foreground, it spoils the picture. What I mean is simply this, that the doctrine of SALVATION THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST, is always to be prominent—always in the foreground. A failure in this regard involves unfaithfulness in doctrine. The council of Trent may have decreed false doctrine; the council of Dort may have done the same. Rome has erred, and Geneva has erred; and it may be the Churchman's duty to show his people wherein. But

let him ever remember, that it is his duty to seek to make those confided to his care good Christians, as well as sound Churchmen ; and that, if they are not saved from their sins, all his labor is lost ; and if they are not saved, because he occupied their minds and pre-engaged their affections with things of secondary importance, he is guilty of the blood of souls.

Faithfulness applies to the *application* as well as to the exhibition of the Truth. "Give to each his portion in due season." How delicate and difficult the task ! Saints and sinners, of all shades of character—young and old—rich and poor—the living and the dying—all are to be approached and so ministered unto, as, if possible, to benefit them in Christ's name.

To be faithful in dispensing, and in the application of saving truth, the steward must first for himself be faithful in the study and practice of God's Word. "Study," says St. Paul to Timothy, "to show thyself approved unto God a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of Truth." And while thus dividing the truth to others, for himself says the same apostle, "holding the mystery of the faith in a *pure conscience*." This, to use the language of Herbert, we are best enabled to do "by dipping and seasoning all our words and sentences in our hearts, before they come into our mouths, truly affecting and cordially expressing all that we say ; so that our auditors may plainly perceive that every word is heart-

deep." Oh, happy that minister who keeps his conscience pure from personal sin, from the neglect of official duties, and from the blood-stains of lost souls !

I cannot dismiss the subject of the steward's fidelity in the household of the Lord without going a step further and alluding to our duty as ministers of the Church to which we belong. Loyalty to the doctrine, discipline and worship of the Church, is solemnly promised by, and reasonably expected of all who minister at her altars. There are extremes without, from which the Church is assaulted, and there may be tendencies within, in some minds, to each of these extremes. There is Romanism upon the one hand, and Christians of various names upon the other, who, however widely they may differ among themselves, agree in opposing, conscientiously, we may admit, what every Churchman holds dear. Now I have no railing accusation to bring against Roman Catholics. If they believe in Christ and love him, they are, however deeply in error, my brethren ; and though I refuse communion and fellowship with them until they have renounced their unscriptural errors, yet I cherish no bitterness against them—wish them no evil—pronounce upon them no malediction, and will use no weapons against them but truth and love. The same truth and the same charity I have for those whose errors are in an opposite direction. Far be it from me to speak evil of their good, or oppose their works of faith ; my Church teaches

me a more excellent way, to pray for "all who profess and call themselves Christians ;" but while she everywhere breathes this Catholic spirit, fidelity to Primitive truth and Apostolic order, forbids entangling alliances with others. The distinctive peculiarities of our Communion—Reformed, Protestant and Free, as well as Primitive and Apostolic—are not, I contend, to be sacrificed to popular prejudice or false ideas of expediency, any more than they are to be superceded by medieval ritualism. Each presbyter, at his ordination, promises "to give faithful diligence, always so to minister the doctrine and sacraments, and the discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this Church hath received the same, according to the commands of God ;" "to be ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away from the Church all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's Word ;" "and to maintain and set forwards quietness, peace and love among all Christian people." Now, though it is not to be supposed that all minds can be brought to think alike on all the questions which agitate the Church, yet it is to be supposed and ought to be expected that all Christian hearts concur in desiring and setting forward "quietness, peace and love." And certainly among ourselves we should not be unmindful of the old church maxim, "In essentials, unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things charity."*

* "In necessariis unitas, in non necessariis libertas, in omnibus charitas."—*St. Augustin.*

But while a large liberty and a warm charity are freely accorded, it should be our study to abuse neither by needlessly magnifying our domestic differences. The spirit of division, it has been said, is a disease which will never be healed by troubling the waters, unless an *angel* were to descend for that purpose. He who needlessly disturbs the peace of the Church, from whatever quarter or under whatever pretext, causing distrust, or dissension among her ministers or members, or is the means of exciting unwarranted prejudice against the institutions and agencies for her extension, or dries up the fountains of her charity, or turns them into strange channels, incurs a fearful responsibility. The language of mere passion should every where be met, as by common consent, with stern rebuke, and the spirit of party be exorcised as the loveless demon of discord. Instead of sowing distrust, we should diligently seek to cherish confidence, and earnestly pray for unity ; instead of pertinaciously maintaining all the old, and ingeniously raising new barriers of separation, we should seek to narrow the grounds of dispute, by fixing attention upon fundamental and catholic principles ; instead of ever peering through the microscope at the controversies of the day, magnifying them into gigantic proportions, why not, with an elevation of soul which rises above meaner things, look up through the telescope, and bring near to ourselves those exceeding great

and precious promises which reveal to our faith fields of light and fruitfulness. The fact is not to be concealed, that differences of opinion, party spirit, the corruption of sound doctrine, the introduction of novelties in worship, and the treachery and apostacy of some of our ministers, have produced alienation, suspicion and distrust among brethren. Our institutions for Christian literature have been denounced, and our missionary organization assailed; the onward march of the Church has been impeded, her unity impaired, and her members deeply humbled and mortified. I state these as well known and acknowledged facts among all parties; I am not, however, going to enter into the merits of the question as to where the blame rests. But as there have been for some time past intimations all over the Church, and from all quarters, of returning confidence and love, I wish on this occasion to contribute my humble mite to these objects, and to hail such intimations as omens of good. I verily believe there is much more harmony and unity in the Church than we are wont to imagine. If our hearts were only so warmed with the love of Christ as to banish selfishness—so inflamed with zeal for souls as to cause us to emulate each other in bringing them into the fold of Christ—we would hear fewer notes of discord, and the large land which is before us inviting us to enter, and the waving harvest imploring us to thrust in the sickle, would rouse a spirit of lofty en-

thusiasm and holy emulation to go in and possess, where duty calls and hope invites.

Loud is the call for laborers. May their numbers be multiplied and their zeal increased ! And may an increased appreciation of the blessings conferred by a devoted ministry be begotten in the Church ; and may its members be stirred up to the duty of consecrating of their substance to make a righteous provision for the support of that ministry. And, with the Christian poet, let us ever continue to entreat the great Head of the Church—

“ That Servants may abound
Of these pure Altars worthy ; Ministers
Detached from pleasure, to the love of gain
Superior, insusceptible of pride,
And by ambitious longings undisturbed ;
Men, whose delight is where their duty leads
Or fixes them ; whose least distinguished day
Shines with some portion of that heavenly lustre
Which makes the Sabbath lovely in the sight
Of blessed angels, pitying human cares.
—— And, as on earth, it is the doom of Truth,
To be perpetually attacked by foes,
Open or covert, be that Priesthood still,
For her defence, replenished with a Band
Of strenuous Champions.”

ADDRESS.

BRETHREN:—

Another year having passed since we last met, it becomes my duty to report the official acts which I have performed during this time, and also to note some of the more material changes which have taken place in the condition of the Diocese. Since I was first called to the post which I now occupy, a period of ten years has elapsed, and it may not be uninteresting or unprofitable to connect with a retrospect of the year just closed, a brief review of this longer term of service, and to endeavor to derive from its leading incidents some hints for our future guidance.

It is rarely our privilege to open a narrative like this without being compelled to record the departure from this mortal life of one or more of our brethren in the ministry. Already, to most of you, it is known, that the Rev. Robert Davis—for more than a quarter of a century a Presbyterian of this Diocese—has recently been borne to “the house appointed for all the living.” Infirm health had long disqualified him for the more active duties of his profession, and had often clouded the serenity and cheerfulness of his mind. But those who knew him best knew him as a man of kind heart, of active and generous sympathies, of great integrity of purpose, and of devout affections. His intellect, beyond that of most men, was clear and

vigorous; and there are not a few who gratefully remember the instruction and the impulse towards a higher life which they derived from his conversation and society. Recurring to the many years during which he went in and out among us, and remembering that the places that have known him so well are to know him no more for ever, we cannot but mingle our regrets with the consolatory hope that our friend, so long an afflicted and solitary man, now rests in the hope of a better resurrection. "The memory of the just is blessed."

In reverting to the names attached to the testimonial of my election, drawn up in May, 1845, I find that out of *seventy-six* clergymen who were then members of the Convention and sharing in its deliberations, *nine* are no longer among the living; and that of the *ninety-three parishes* then represented, *twenty-one* have been deprived by death of one or more of the deputies then present. Such facts constitute a startling call to work while we have time. The mutability of all things connected with the Church Militant, especially in this country, is still further illustrated by the fact, that of the *seventy-six* clergymen just referred to, only *one-half* are now resident in this Diocese, and in more than one instance they have removed in the interim, but have since returned.

SUMMARY.*

During the past year I officiated on two hundred and forty-three occasions, on one hundred and thirty-six of which Confirmation was administered. The whole number of persons *confirmed* is *one thousand two hundred and ninety-four*.

Six Churches have been *consecrated* and *five* corner-stones of churches laid. *Eight candidates* have been ordained *Deacons*, and *Six Deacons* advanced to the *Priesthood*.

I have also preached on about two hundred occasions, baptized fifteen infants and one adult, administered the Holy Communion twenty-one times, solemnized five marriages, and officiated at four funerals.

The present number of Candidates for Orders in the Diocese is twenty-five. Of Clergymen of all degrees the number is one hundred and sixty-seven; of Parishes and Congregations nominally

* See Particulars at the close of the Address.

one hundred and seventy-two ; actually, not more than one hundred and fifty-six.

During the last ten years (less four months which elapsed between my election and consecration) I have officiated in public on two thousand two hundred and eighty-four occasions, on one thousand and two of which the rite of Confirmation was administered. The whole number of persons Confirmed during this period is eight thousand six hundred.

I have also, during the same period, consecrated fifty churches, admitted sixty-five candidates to the Diaconate and sixty-one Deacons to the Priesthood, preached seventeen hundred sermons, baptized one hundred and fifty-four infants and adults, and administered the Holy Communion two hundred and nineteen times.

In instituting a comparison between the present and the past condition of the Diocese, we should remember that figures are at best but an imperfect index of its actual state. There may be increase of churches and clergymen, a material addition of worshippers and communicants, and yet the aggregate moral and spiritual power of the Diocese be stationary or even retrograde. I would speak, therefore, with diffidence of any apparent prosperity which we enjoy; yet not without thankfulness that so many signs of increasing activity and zeal can be discerned, both among the Clergy and among the Laity. One of the most cheering facts in our experience is that the advance, during the last ten years, in the number of communicants and Sunday school scholars, and in the amount contributed to benevolent objects, has been greater in proportion, than the increase in the number of parishes and clergymen; thus indicating not merely an expansion of our visible limits, but a substantial addition to the strength and earnestness and liberality of our older congregations. In much larger proportion, too, than formerly, our rural and suburban parishes are coming to be self-supporting, and throughout the Diocese, with a few exceptions, the erections of Parsonages, the separation of parishes which were formerly held jointly by the same clergyman, and the increase of clerical compensation, indicate progress. The number of our Sunday school scholars is larger than in any of our sister Dioceses. Some provision has been made for the support, at school, of the sons and yet more for that of the daughters

of the Clergy. Academies of the highest order have been opened in this city and elsewhere, under the immediate auspices of the Church, in which a large number of the young of both sexes have been educated gratuitously. Hospitals have been founded for the sick, for the aged and infirm, and for orphans ; and measures are in progress, especially in this city, to enlarge materially our sphere of operations in this department.

In 1845, the number of clergymen reported as belonging to this Diocese, was 121 ; in 1855, it is 167. In 1855, the number of parishes reported was 119 ; but the actual number that had more than a name to live, was less than 100, and of these more than one-half received material assistance from without. In 1855, the number of parishes is ostensibly 172, but actually not more than 156, of which not less than 80 are self-supporting ; indicating an increase of 56 in the number of congregations, and of 46 in the number of the clergy. In 1844, the number of communicants reported to the General Convention, as belonging to this Diocese, was 8,865 ; in 1853, (nine years later) it was 12,600. In 1844, the number of Sunday school scholars reported, was 9,305 ; in 1853, it was 15,004.

During the ten years just ended, fifty-four churches have been erected and occupied, and seven more are now in progress. Between twenty and thirty churches have also been materially enlarged and improved ; twenty-three parsonage houses have been erected or purchased, and I rejoice to add that there are very few places of worship in the Diocese which, during the same period, have not been to some extent renovated and adorned. In the city of Philadelphia alone, eighteen new churches have been built for new congregations, nine have been enlarged, and nearly all repaired and improved.

There is one feature in the operations of the Diocese, during this period, to which we may recur I think with special satisfaction, for it seems to promise the approach of a time when we shall be able to command greatly increased means for church extension. I refer to the reduction, and in a large measure, the entire liquidation of church debts. During the last few years this work has absorbed our resources to an extent much greater than is usually supposed. The sum devoted to this object in the city and county of Philadelphia alone, within the last eight years, cannot have been less than two

hundred thousand dollars.* In every part of the Diocese the same righteous and prudent work has been advancing, and the whole amount remaining unpaid is comparatively small. Its liquidation is an easy task, and once accomplished, we may hope that the means and energy which have been lavished so freely on the ungrateful work of discharging obligations belonging to the past, and in the incurring of which many of us had no part, will be held sacred for the future and rapid extension of the Saviour's Kingdom. What may not be hoped from the next ten years, if the power and liberality thus developed in conjunction with that which has been already given to the work, and in conjunction with much which is still to be quickened into life—if all this shall be addressed under the inspiration of faith and hope to new enterprises?—I am aware that, under the pressure of an imperious and urgent sense of duty, this work may have been pushed forward, in some cases, at a rate which induces temporary exhaustion. But such exhaustion soon recruits itself, while the power that has been developed by faithful and strenuous effort, forms a permanent addition to our resources. It is a hope, to which I have clung fondly during past years, and which I shall not readily relinquish, that those who have done so nobly in liquidating debts which have descended to them, in many cases, as heirlooms from their predecessors, will not be wanting when they are called upon to meet the rapidly increasing wants of this vast city and commonwealth, and to rear new sanctuaries for their children and their children's children.

† The Diocese has a great work before it, and it is one which admits of no delay. So long as this incubus of debt weighed upon many of our largest and most earnest congregations, at once a burden and a reproach, I have been slower in devising and pressing the establishment of new parishes, and the prosecution of new missionary and benevolent enterprises, than would otherwise have become my office and comported with my desires. This impediment is now all but overcome, and the church in Pennsylvania, and especially in Philadelphia, wants but the will to move forward to a new and blessed career of beneficence. This city has doubled its population and

* During the last ten years nearly \$400,000, have also been paid in Philadelphia on account of new church buildings, parsonages, &c., in the Diocese out of Philadelphia, the amount paid for the same object has been over \$200,000.

† This portion of the Address was delivered as a *Charge* on the following day.

more than doubled its capital in less than fifteen years, and in its growth and abounding prosperity the members of our communion have had their full share. The whole commonwealth is advancing with strides more and more rapid. Multitudes from different lands are thronging towards its mines, manufactories, fields and forests. While their skill and toil enhances our power and fills our coffers, they may well claim that they be not left destitute of the true riches. In our large towns and mining districts there are numbers frightfully large who seem to have none to care for their souls. Schools are opening the intellectual capacities of our people and creating an appetite for mental employment and gratification, which must be fed from the tree whose fruit is for the healing of the nations, or it will sate itself on garbage. The labors of philanthropic men and the authority of law, are likely to stay, in some good degree, the awful flood of intemperance, which has swept so long and so ruthlessly over many homes and through many souls; and minds that have hitherto been besotted by vice and indigence will now, we fondly hope, be open to appeals from the cross and from a sanctified literature. God is also inclining many, who are without, towards our services, and a large proportion of them have property and social influence. In yet greater mercy, He is rousing our people, both lay and clerical, to a new sense of the debt which we owe as a church to the poor and outcast and forsaken, and He is moving us to tremble lest the Divine Presence be withdrawn from a communion to which "the common people" do not press as they did of old to hear the words of Christ, when his name was cast out as evil by scribes, pharisees, and principal men. In an unwonted manner too, He is disposing us to relax the stiffness of our liturgical system when we go abroad in missionary labor; and in almost every conceivable way he seems to say to this church in Pennsylvania, as of old he said to the angel of the church in Philadelphia, "behold I have set before thee an open door." Shall we fail in the wisdom, the courage, the devotion, that become such a crisis? Never was a more golden opportunity held out to us in this commonwealth or in this city, and if we prove wholly unequal to its needs, we may well fear lest the candlestick be removed out of its place.

Two objects have been kept steadily in view, *first*, the consolidation and enlargement of such of our congregations as have been re-

cently established or are still weak ; and *secondly*, the formation of new parishes as opportunities offer. A *third* object is entitled to more consideration than has yet been applied to it. I allude to the care of such scattered members of our flock as cannot be gathered at once into separate congregations, but who need, as they earnestly desire, both for themselves and their children the offices of the church ; and ministrations to whom can be well connected with missionary labors among those who belong to no communion. Such persons are to be found—sheep without a shepherd—in every part of the Diocese. Already services among some of this class, by District or Itenerating Missionaries, have resulted in the establishment of a few new congregations, in the revival of others which were nearly extinct, and in the edification and comfort of many sons and daughters of our communion. It is a department of our work, however, which deserves to be greatly enlarged. I can conceive of few measures more likely to honor God by benefitting men, than a well digested system of *Itenerancy*, which shall cover all Pennsylvania not yet occupied and be administered by men of sound judgment, earnest zeal and indomitable perseverance. It might embrace the care of such feeble and stationary parishes as now engage too large a share of the time and strength of their pastors. Three Presbyters, the Rev. S. T. Lord, the Rev. W. H. Paddock and the Rev. A. Prior, are now acting in this capacity ; the first two in Western, the third in Eastern Pennsylvania.

When we examine what has been done in promoting the stability and comfort of the pastoral relation by increasing salaries, building parsonages, providing Rectors' Libraries, with free scholarships for their children, and an endowment for their families in case of death, the aggregate seems very large ; yet it bears but a moderate proportion to what we need. Here is a field which may well claim our steady and earnest attention. What has been accomplished in it already, demonstrates that nothing but resolute effort and earnest prayer are needed to achieve what remains. In this and every Diocese, however, there are and ever must be, positions which can be occupied only at considerable—sometimes at very great—sacrifice to their incumbents. No one can witness, as I do, the cheerfulness with which refined and educated men and delicate and accomplished women, submit to the severest personal privations, or draw uncea^s-

ingly upon their own strength or private means, to eke out an insufficient salary, without being filled with admiration and with gratitude to that God who thus strengthens his servants to give rather than receive, nor without sounding again and again to those whom Providence has blessed with substance the call to remember these brethren and sisters in their heroic struggle against want and discouragement.

In no part of the Diocese is the opening for missionary labor more inviting than in Philadelphia, and in none perhaps do we so much need to redouble our exertions. Here we have wealth, zeal and the requisite capacity to conduct missions on the largest and most effective scale. I will now but express the hope that this too long neglected work will soon be undertaken with a vigor commensurate in some degree with its importance. And in this connection let me suggest whether in erecting new churches it may not be expedient to abandon the plan of multiplying such as are intended only or mainly for the poor. They do not seem to harmonize with our position or our necessities. As churches for the poor, they are apt to be avoided by all who do not expect to remain in that class or who are unwilling to proclaim their indigence. The rich and especially the middle classes shun them of course—so that too generally they languish, badly supported and not well attended. In the house of God, where *His* special presence dwells who is the Maker of them all, rich and poor and those of every class ought, as it seems to me, to meet together. It promotes sympathies which are none too strong or active now; it secures that churches shall be large enough to be ultimately self-supporting, and it opens for the clergy that diversified sphere of labor which is best for their mental and spiritual culture.

The system of *Convocations for the Clergy*, in different districts of the Diocese, was adopted in the hope that it would develope a spirit of co-operation and self-reliance among the churches in such districts—that it would create centres of church enterprise and activity out of which independent Dioceses might, in some cases, ultimately spring and promote sentiments of affection and fraternity generally among our clergy and people. Some of these results have, I think, been secured already, and I cannot but hope that if the

system works itself out steadily and efficiently, all of them will be compassed in time. Some of the Convocations evince increased interest in missions within their own bounds.

In my last address I expressed the opinion that this Diocese ought, at no distant day, to have a *Training College for Ministers of the Gospel and Teachers of Youth*. The rapid growth of our resources and spiritual necessities will contribute each year to demonstrate that such an Institution is a necessity. Our population is one that can be dealt with most successfully by clergymen trained in its midst and sharing in its habits and tastes. Pennsylvania embraces great diversities of people whether we consider their origin or their pursuits. Every kind of employment, whether rural, mining, manufacturing or commercial, has within our bounds, its representatives in large and increasing numbers, and almost every nation of Europe has contributed ingredients towards the great social caldron which is seething around us. But with all these varieties there is still a certain unity of character, and we need candidates for the ministry who can appreciate the latter while they are being trained to adjust themselves to the manifold phases of the former. An education, moreover, which shall fit a man to be a successful and efficient minister in the different spheres afforded by this Diocese would qualify him for almost any position which is likely to present itself in the United States; and it is therefore within our power to deal here with the whole problem of Domestic Missions. The remotest West can hardly present emergencies to a missionary which may not be met with in some part of Pennsylvania, and if in an Institution of our own, we can train men with the force, the tact, the versatility, the genial temper, the unconquerable resolution and self-sacrificing zeal which are needed to win the confidence and allegiance of the people of this Commonwealth, we shall have done much for the solution of a momentous question interesting to every part of our church and of our country. It is a subject for sincere congratulation that the foundation of such a College is likely to be laid at no distant day.

In closing this Address I introduce another subject on which I hoped to have been prepared to express myself with entire distinctness. From the beginning of my Episcopate I have contemplated the *division of this Diocese* as a measure which ought not

to be long delayed. As far as I have had opportunity I have endeavored quietly but steadily to prepare for it, by developing the energies of the remoter districts and rendering them more and more equal to the task of self-support. I have been sensible that more Episcopal as well as more clerical and lay force was desirable, and that the rapid growth of our population and my own advancing age would render a reduction in the size of the Diocese doubly expedient. So far as my own wishes are concerned I could at once propose a line of division which would leave both the Dioceses large enough to occupy all the energies of their incumbents, and I should be willing myself to be assigned, for the remainder of my life, to the charge of either of them. It will cost me severe pangs to part with any of the friends among whom I have gone ministering for the last ten years and at whose hands I have received such unmeasured kindness. But delay would not be likely, at least on my part, to lessen those pangs when at length the time for separation came, and I should hold myself unworthy of my office and of the confidence which you have generously given me if, on such a question, I could be governed by any other consideration than your welfare, the welfare of those you represent and the honor of the Saviour.

Until recently I intended to propose that steps contemplating an early division be taken at once. Circumstances have occurred, however, which render it more than possible, that the contingency contemplated by the Canon which authorizes the election of an Assistant Bishop, may present itself before long, and in that event such an election might be thought to supersede the necessity of an immediate division of the Diocese. I therefore reserve the subject, and in my future course will endeavor to be guided by the indications of Providence, and by the counsel of such friends, medical and otherwise, as may be able best to appreciate the emergencies of the case, as it respects both the Diocese and myself.

Such personal relief as (I am admonished) I imperiously and immediately need, I can obtain in part, and perhaps entirely, by declining all duty which does not pertain directly to my office. I have participated, since I came to this Diocese, in many movements which contemplated the general improvement of society, because I felt that labor of that kind was eminently becoming in a Christian Bishop, and because I hoped that it might, if properly discharged, not only

benefit its more immediate objects, but also exert a benign reflex influence upon our Communion. But such labor I have always regarded as wholly secondary to my proper official work, and I shall not hesitate to withdraw from it in proportion as precarious health, or accumulating Episcopal duty indicates the propriety or necessity of such a course.

Having announced my readiness to co-operate in dividing the Diocese, and my cordial desire to see it consummated soon, I will add some remarks on a subject of more general interest. The reduction of Dioceses to what has been called the primitive standard is, with many, a favorite idea. By the constitution of our American Church, as it now reads, no new Diocese can be formed out of existing Dioceses, if it contain less than eight thousand square miles of territory, or have less than thirty Presbyters canonically resident therein and regularly settled in a parish or congregation. It was proposed in the General Convention of 1850, that both these restrictions should be withdrawn, and that, with the consent of the Bishop and Convention more immediately interested, and that of the General Convention, new Dioceses should be formed without any limitation as to territorial extent or clerical force. At the Convention of 1853, this proposition received the unanimous consent of the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies, but was non-concurred in by the Bishops, by a vote of 17 to 9. As this action of the Bishops has been made the occasion of reproach—ambitious motives having been freely attributed to them—and as it was on my motion that the vote of non-concurrence was adopted, it may be proper to assign some of the reasons which induced it, and also to develop some of the principles which, in my judgment, ought to govern the future policy of our Church on this important subject. I was myself the more free to move in this matter—on the occasion referred to—because under the law, as it now stands, the Diocese of Pennsylvania might at once be divided into three if not four dioceses, each having the required number of presbyters and square miles. As no relaxation, therefore, of these requirements would be likely to affect my personal position, I felt that I could deal with the subject simply on general principles, and without the obloquy to which some of my brethren, under their different circumstances, might be exposed.

The Resolution of non-concurrence adopted by the Bishops was

in these words:—"Resolved, That this House non-concur in the proposed amendment to the Seventh Article of the Constitution, for the reason that it would not, in their judgment, be wise to dispense with all restrictions as to the number of Presbyters and extent of territory." They followed their non-concurrence with the proposal to the lower House, (through a committee of conference,) to dispense with all territorial restriction, except that not more than one Diocese should be formed in the same city—simply requiring that to entitle a new Diocese to be established it must have a certain number of self-supporting parishes and settled presbyters, (fifteen of each) and must leave not less than thirty self-supporting parishes and twenty presbyters in the parent diocese. That overture was accepted by the House of Deputies, and if ratified at the next General Convention, becomes thenceforth a part of the organic law of our Church. It leaves the matter as open as can well be required, while it secures that no strong Diocese shall set off an insignificant fraction of its territory and churches to be a feeble and sickly body, and provides on the other hand, that any part of an existing Diocese which seeks to become independent, shall give, in its number of clergy and self-sustaining parishes, some pledge that it has within itself the elements of life and growth. Western New York, when formed into a Diocese, had seventy-six clergymen. The Church in each State, it must be remembered, is entitled already, to erect itself into an independent Diocese, and but six parishes and six presbyters are necessary to entitle such diocese to elect its own Bishop. Without the boundaries of States having this small number of parishes and presbyters we must rely, of course, on Missionary and Provisional Bishops; and as our territory expands of late, even faster than our population—it is evident, that for some time to come such Bishops, in common with some of our Diocesans, must labor over large tracts of country, and rely for support either on parishes which they hold as rectors, or on their brethren of older and richer Dioceses. There is here, brethren, a field for our liberality and fraternal co-operation which we shall never, I trust, overlook.

When we come to regulate the sub-division of older dioceses, we encounter questions which deserve thorough discussion, and which will be resolved in different ways, according to the view which

we take of the Episcopal office, and of the functions proper to it in this country.

In the early church, the jurisdiction of Bishops was naturally co-extensive with a principal city and its adjacent villages and territory. Its territorial extent, however, was often much greater than is commonly represented. The African Dioceses (according to Bingham) embraced on an average three or four-score towns and villages, besides the principal city. Hippo, the Diocese of St. Augustine, was more than forty miles long, which, if estimated by the time required to traverse it, would be equivalent at present, in most of the older dioceses, to two hundred miles. Carthage is said to have had five hundred clergymen subject in the fourth century to the same Bishop, and Hooker adduces the authority of Chrysostom and Theophilus of Alexandria, to prove that "ample jurisdiction" was the rule rather than the exception.

But to my mind, a more weighty consideration is to be found in the great difference which may be observed between the position of a modern Bishop in a Reformed Communion, and that of the ancient Episcopate. The conception formed, under the Roman Empire, of almost every local authority, was naturally modelled after that which, to a Roman mind, was then the ideal of Executive power—a centralized monarchy. For a long time, Presbyters, instead of being Rectors of independent parishes, were mere assistants or curates of their Bishop, who was Pastor of the principal church in the Diocese. They were attached to the principal or parent church, and served the Bishop both as his council of advice and as his subordinates in preaching and ministering the sacraments and in missionary labor throughout the surrounding villages and districts. I need hardly indicate the vast difference between such a Bishop and one invested with the supervision of an American Diocese, where Episcopalians form a small minority of those who profess and call themselves Christians, and where parishes and their Rectors have not only a certain independent existence, but are, in one respect, the fountains of our legislation, and indeed of all church authority.

Such a Diocesan Episcopacy, being the only one adapted to the habits and genius of our people, is the only one likely to gain a footing among American Protestants. A monarchical Episcopate

which would transform each Bishop into an Autocrat, his Presbyters into drill-sergeants, and the people into spiritual serfs, is, among the children of the Reformation in this land, simply an impossibility. And we ought, it seems to me, to thank God for it. A Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, who is wise, will be as jealous of the rights of his Clergy and of their people as of his own. He will hold in highest estimation those of his administrative functions which are merely advisory and preventive, and will count it more a pleasure and a privilege to foresee, and by friendly private counsel, avert evil and promote good, than to exercise the lordliest rule over God's heritage.

But, if such are the functions of a Bishop—if, in his cure, each Presbyterian has an independent authority and jurisdiction of his own, the labors that pertained to the Episcopal office, during the first five centuries, have been greatly abridged, and the sphere in which he applies them will admit, in the same proportion, of being geographically enlarged. If he is to strengthen the position and increase the proper influence of the Clergy, he should not be too much among their people, so as to be tempted to supersede them in their proper functions, or to open his ears too readily to the complaints of the discontented. While he will be easy of access, and have a ready "mind and will" for all kindly offices, he will avoid the familiarity that breeds contempt. He will put such an interval between his official visits that the anticipation of them will rouse the slumbering energies of the parish, inciting the Pastor to more than usual zeal and diligence in preaching, both publicly and from house to house, and animating the Laity to greater carefulness for the interests of the Church of God.

And, then, as to the support of the Episcopate: If the efficiency of the office is to be greatly increased in the older states, it must be through arrangements which will leave to a Diocese full freedom to select the best man for its peculiar wants, and to a Bishop full opportunity to devote all his time and energies to the duties proper to his office. Neither of these conditions can be so well attained as when this support is furnished by the Diocese at large, as contradistinguished from any particular parish, on the one hand, and from private sources on the other. If it be a condition of his election that he hold the cure of a large and wealthy parish as the means of

his support, then the exigencies or tastes of that parish, rather than the wants of the Diocese, will have to be consulted, not only in his selection, but also in the disposal of his time and strength. On the same principle he should be the stipendiary of no one portion of his flock to the neglect or exclusion of the rest. If, on the other hand, he is to be sustained out of his own private property, not only will his sense of accountability to his Diocese be impaired, but the preference given to him over other candidates for the office, will run the chance of being governed by the very last consideration which ought to rule in a question touching so closely the dearest interests of Christ's church. There is no danger that wealth shall not be held in sufficiently high estimation in this country, and in our branch of the Christian world. It will bode only evil if it shall ever come to be considered as a necessary qualification for the highest office and honors of a Diocese. Disqualification it surely ought not to be. But all the church's ministers will, as it seems to me, best serve and most honor her when they are examples and patterns of simplicity and frugality in all their habits; and such they can hardly be expected to be if they are preferred before others mainly on the ground of personal affluence.

These few suggestions may render it evident why the Bishops desired to engraft on the Constitution some security that, in the creation of new Dioceses, there should be at least the promise that they shall, at no distant day, be self-supporting as it respects both a certain number of parishes and the Episcopal office. In establishing parishes we consider this a wise provision. Can it be less wise in the formation of new Dioceses out of those now existing?

In our anxious desire to promote the growth and efficiency of our communion, we are apt to anticipate too much from some one untried expedient, instead of laboring to develope all its means of action. Among the fondest visions with which I contemplate the future is the hope that, should a few years more of active labor be vouchsafed to me, they may be subsidiary to a twofold, threefold, or even fourfold division of this Diocese. But a somewhat careful examination of the statistics of our American Church for twenty or thirty years past admonishes me not to expect from such a measure any great and sudden enlargement of our numbers or our capacity for usefulness. The only State in which this course has been taken does not exhibit

during the last twenty years much greater collective growth by our church, in the ratio of the growth of population, than has taken place during the same period in Pennsylvania. The new Diocese set off has enjoyed the active oversight of a Bishop surpassed by few in qualities which illustrate and recommend the Episcopal office, or give effect to Episcopal supervision ; and yet, if we are to judge from the increase of the clergy, we should infer that its progress during the last twelve years, had been behind that of a majority of eastern Dioceses. And when we compare the whole of New York with the whole of Virginia, or of Connecticut, where the policy of Assistant Bishops has prevailed, we find that when the rate at which population has increased is compared with the increase of our clergy, Virginia, from 1834 to 1854, made progress quite equal to that of New York. I refer to these facts neither to recommend the practice of unnecessarily multiplying Assistant Bishops, which I do not approve, nor to disparage the policy of dividing Dioceses, but to indicate that there are other causes, more powerful than a mere increase of the Episcopate, which affect the progress and prosperity of our church. In some states, from the peculiar character of the immigrant population, or from the prevalence of emigration, or from the force of hereditary antipathies, that degree of advancement is impossible, even with the best appliances, which, elsewhere, is accomplished easily. In Pennsylvania, all these causes combine to cripple our exertions, and nothing can overcome them but the earnest co-operation of all orders of clergy and people. That an increase of Episcopal force is expedient and all but necessary, I have already avowed as my conviction ; but experience proves that it does not necessarily produce a corresponding increase in the number and efficiency of the clergy, nor in the zeal and liberality of the laity.—More prayer for an unction from the Holy One—more strenuous effort to glorify God and do good to all men as opportunity offers—more co-operation of laity and clergy in making aggressions on the kingdom of darkness and debasement immediately around them—more special preparation on the part of all and especially on the part of the clergy for the peculiar work which devolves upon us in this age and land—here is the work which it most behooves us to do and to do with our might.

To this work let us address ourselves with one mind and heart.

The grand condition of all beneficent progress, when wrought out through human instruments, is a profound conviction, on the part of those instruments, of their past deficiencies, and a resolute determination, with God's blessing, to amend them. We may well be grateful to the Author of all good for what has been accomplished hitherto in His name, and for His glory. But other feelings than those of self-applause surely become us when we review the past; and if we hope for the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel, other emotions than those of self-confidence should possess our minds as we look forward to the future. If we have great openings and opportunities, so have we great difficulties and discouragements. He who can enable us to remove the one out of the way, if we assail them in a spirit of humble trust in Him, can easily change the other into mere embarrassments and failures, if we move onward in our own strength. May God then fill us more than ever with a sense of our immediate dependence on the succors of His grace. He who is over you in the Lord has little occasion to felicitate himself on the meekness or the trustfulness with which he has toiled at his work. He needs your prayers; he earnestly asks that he may receive them; that for the next decennial period of that work, should he be spared to fulfil it, he may have a double portion of the wisdom, the zeal, and the self-renouncing faith which come only from above. The Clergy, at such a time, may well ask wherein they can be more diligent—more wise in the use of every opportunity—more bold and warm-hearted, and yet more gentle in probing the consciences of all who hear them—more intent, in fine, on every good word and work. And the Laity—has not the time come when we of the Clergy should demand more of their aid in teaching the ignorant, in reclaiming the vicious, in giving personal relief and oversight to the necessitous? Has not the time come when we should admonish them, in all affection, but with all faithfulness—as we have never yet done—that the gold and the silver are the Lord's? And will they not incline their ears and hearts to the word of exhortation? God is crowning, with wonderful success, the enterprises and the industry of many of them. Should not thank-offerings be laid on his altar, bearing some proportion to the munificence of His unmerited gifts? Should we put our trust in uncertain riches when His providence alone can keep us in safety, or fill our hearts with contentment and



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gladness? God spared not His own Son when our souls were to be saved and our world redeemed. Should we pass by on the other side when multitudes lie weltering in sin and ignorance, and when a portion of our substance, given in season and with liberal hand, might cause many a scene of spiritual desolation to rejoice and blossom as the rose? "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." O, that God would put it into the hearts of the Laity of this Diocese to resolve, in His strength, on great things for His honor; that, gathered frequently with their Pastors to implore an outpouring of the Divine presence and benediction, they might bring on another day of Pentecostal grace and Pentecostal bountifulness. If we would have God honor us with the gifts of His Spirit, we must honor Him with the offerings of our liberality. We must give, too, as we have opportunity, not waiting till death shall deprive us of the ability to peril our means on the hazards of trade, or to lavish their yearly income on ostentatious self-gratification. One memorable example of Christian munificence which brooked no delay has been given to us by a communicant of this Diocese, during the last year. In the meridian of life, in the full exercise of all his energies, after but a few years of success, he has turned aside to found a charity which will compare honorably with any of our time for forecast, comprehensiveness and liberality. May there be many among us of like mind. May ministers and people, looking to God, who alone can prosper the work of our hands, but who declares to those who devise liberal things, that by liberal things they shall stand—may Bishops, Clergy and people, in His strength and grace, go forth with brave and indomitable hearts to the work that is given them to do.

Wherefore consider with yourselves the end of the ministry towards ye children of God, towards the Spouse and Body of Christ, and see that ye never cease your labor, your care and diligence, until ye have done all that lieth in you, according to your bounden duty, to bring all such as are or shall be committed to your charge unto that agreement in the faith and knowledge of God, and to that ripeness and perfectness of age in Christ, that there be no place left among you for error in religion or viciousness of life.

ALONZO POTTER.